

Applicant: P. Bonutti
Application No.: 10/685,117
Examiner: G. Jackson

Amendments to the Claims

- 1-3. (canceled)
4. (currently amended) A bone suture assembly for treating a fracture of a bone comprising:
a first bone plate positioned proximate to the bone;
a second bone plate positioned proximate to the bone generally opposite the first bone plate;
a suture positioned through the first and second bone plates and within a passage across the fracture of the bone to thereby stabilize the fracture; and
~~A bone suture assembly as defined in claim 3 further including~~ at least one fastener to hold the first bone plate to the bone.
5. (original) A bone suture assembly as defined in claim 4 wherein at least one fastener extends across the fracture of the bone.
6. (original) A bone suture assembly as defined in claim 5 wherein at least one fastener extends through the bone and through the second bone plate.
7. (original) A bone suture assembly as defined in claim 6 wherein at least one fastener includes a screw and nut.
8. (currently amended) A bone suture assembly for treating a fracture of a bone comprising:
a first bone plate positioned proximate to the bone;
a suture positioned through the first bone plate and across the fracture of the bone to thereby stabilize the fracture; and
~~A bone suture assembly as defined in claim 1 further including~~ a tubular member positioned through the fractured bone generally orthogonal to the first bone plate bone and across the fracture, wherein the suture is disposed within the tubular member.

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9. (original) A bone suture assembly as defined in claim 8 wherein the tubular member is packed with bone particles.
10. (original) A bone suture assembly as defined in claim 8 wherein the tubular member is packed with bone osteoinductive protein.
11. (currently amended) A bone suture assembly as defined in claim 4 [[3]] wherein the passage is nonlinear.
12. (original) A bone suture assembly as defined in claim 11 wherein at least one tubular member is disposed within the nonlinear passage and wherein the suture is disposed within at least one tubular member.
13. (currently amended) A bone suture assembly for treating a fracture of a bone comprising:
a first suture anchor positioned proximate to the bone;
a first bone plate positioned between the first suture anchor and the bone, the first bone plate and first suture anchor positioned generally on the same side of the bone; and
a suture positioned across the fracture of the bone to stabilize the fracture, the suture having a first end portion disposed through the bone plate and attached to the first suture anchor.
14. (original) A bone suture assembly as defined in claim 13 further including a second suture anchor positioned proximate to the bone generally opposite the first suture anchor, the second suture anchor attached to a second end portion of the suture.
15. (original) A bone suture assembly as defined in claim 14 further including a second bone plate positioned between the second suture anchor and the bone.
16. (original) A bone suture assembly as defined in claim 15 further including a passage

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through the bone and across the fracture, wherein the suture is disposed within the passage.

17. (original) A bone suture assembly as defined in claim 16 further including at least one fastener to hold the first bone plate to the bone.
18. (original) A bone suture assembly as defined in claim 17 wherein at least one fastener extends across the fracture of the bone.
19. (original) A bone suture assembly as defined in claim 18 wherein at least one fastener extends through the bone and through the second bone plate.
20. (original) A bone suture assembly as defined in claim 19 wherein at least one fastener includes a screw and nut.
21. (original) A bone suture assembly as defined in claim 14 wherein the first and second suture anchors are suture retainers.
22. (original) A bone suture assembly as defined in claim 21 wherein the suture retainers include deformable material to hold the suture retainers to the suture.
23. (original) A method for treating a fracture of a bone comprising:
 - positioning at least one suture anchor proximate to the bone;
 - positioning at least one bone plate between at least one suture anchor and the bone;
 - moving at least one suture across the fracture of the bone and through at least one bone plate;
 - attaching at least one suture to at least one suture anchor; and
 - tensioning at least one suture to stabilize the fracture of the bone.
24. (original) A method as defined in claim 23 wherein at least one suture anchor is a suture

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retainer.

25. (original) A method as defined in claim 23 further including fastening at least one bone plate to the bone with at least one screw.
26. (original) A method as defined in claim 25 wherein at least one screw has a length less than a diameter of the bone.
27. (original) A method as defined in claim 25 wherein at least one screw has a length greater than a diameter of the bone.
28. (original) A method as defined in claim 27 wherein at least one screw includes at least one nut.
29. (original) A method as defined in claim 28 wherein at least one screw extends across the fracture of the bone.
30. (original) A method as defined in claim 23 further including forming at least one passage through the bone, and wherein moving at least one suture includes moving at least one suture through at least one passage.
31. (original) A method as defined in claim 30 wherein attaching at least one suture to at least one suture anchor is performed prior to moving at least one suture, and wherein moving at least one suture includes moving at least one suture attached to at least one suture anchor through at least one passage.
32. (original) A method as defined in claim 31 further including changing the orientation of at least one suture anchor from a first to a second configuration thereby causing at least one suture anchor to become proximate to the bone and impassable through at least one passage.

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33. (original) A method as defined in claim 32 wherein tensioning at least one suture includes tensioning at least one suture between at least two suture anchors to stabilize the fracture of the bone.